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TRYING ON THE CROWN.

It is King Henry the Fourth and his son Prince Henry. This is the story: The king was on his death-bed. He had been left alone with his son; and as he lay for some time motionless, and apparently breathless, the young prince, thinking his father was dead, took up the crown, placed it on his head, and left the room with it.

The king, who had been sleeping, awoke soon after, and, missing his crown, called his attendants, from whom he learned who had taken it. He summoned Prince Henry into his presence, and with very bitter words upbraided him, both on account of the grief and shame which his previous life had occasioned, and because that now, as the king thought, he had shown how little filial love was in his heart by his eagerness to get possession of his dying father's crown.

The young prince, kneeling before the king, declared, with tears, that nothing was further from his heart than the desire to take his father's place upon the throne; that he had supposed his father to be dead, and had placed the crown upon his own head, resolving, that, from that hour, he would live a better life than he had lived thus far, and would honor the memory of his beloved father. The king forgave him, and was reconciled; and it is said that Prince Henry proved the sincerity of his words of penitence by turning from his ways of folly and sin.

I have been thinking of another story, — about an English nobleman, the Duke of Hamilton. He died young, near the close of the last century. He loved the Bible; he loved Jesus; and so, when death came, he was ready. He called his brother Douglas to his bedside, and, having spoken to him with the greatest affection and solemnity of manner, he closed with these words: —

"And now, Douglas, in a little time you will be a duke, and *I shall be a king.*"

Do you see what he meant? His brother, at his death, would receive the title of duke; but this young follower of Jesus, though he must leave his dukedom on earth, believed that he should receive a "crown of glory" in heaven, and become a king there, according to the promise of Him whose word never fails.

For have you not read that glorious ascription of praise to Jesus Christ which we find in the Revelation of St. John? — "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, *and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father,* — to Him be glory and dominion for ever."

None of us may wear a kingly crown on earth; but for the humble, loving follower of the Saviour, there is a crown laid up more glorious than any earthly diadem, however brightly it may glitter with gems and gold. Another year is closing: are you a year nearer the heavenly home than you were one year ago? Are you one of those meek, faithful, loving ones? If you are, though here you may have trials and crosses, — for our best Friend has told us to expect them, and to take them patiently, — there, in the home above, the crown awaits you; and when you reach that home, and the crown is placed upon your head, you will find it one of your greatest joys to cast that crown in adoration at the feet of our dear Redeemer.

For the Child at Home.

SONGS IN THE NIGHT.

Do you remember, children, that beautiful verse in the Psalms, "Yet the Lord will command his loving kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me"? I suppose you understand some thing of the first part. You know how God shows his loving-kindness to you in the daytime in giving you a happy home, and kind friends, and so many pleasant things. But perhaps you do not see so easily how "in the night his song can be with you, or, as it is expressed in a verse in Job, how he "giveth songs in the night."

You go to bed at night, and fall fast asleep, so that you know nothing more till the morning light wakes you to another happy day. And so, perhaps, you will say, "How can I think of God's goodness in the night, and feel glad, and praise him for it?"

I think David meant, that, in the night of trouble and sorrow, God would make him so happy, that he would sing praises to him even then. But often pain or sorrow keeps us awake in the night, when it would be very lonely and sad without God's presence: if we love him, he will make us glad even then, and fill our hearts with joy and praise. Long ago, I knew a little girl who could have told you from her own experience how true this verse is. God had given her a beautiful home, and kind parents, and every thing to make her happy, so that she felt his loving-

kindness over her all the day. He had taught her to love him, so that she was a very happy child. But she was not strong and well like you; and sometimes she woke up in the night with pain, which would keep her awake for a long time. She was alone in the dark night: but thoughts of God's presence and love made her very happy; and many sweet hymns, which she had learned, came to her mind, so that she had "songs in the night." She used to think of her darling brother who was in heaven, and wonder if he ever came to her little room to watch over her in the quiet night; and she liked to think how happy she should be when God took her to meet him again.

God did not take her to heaven then, as she sometimes hoped he would; but she lived to know that God can give joy in darker nights of pain and sorrow than she ever thought of then.

Only love God and trust him, and he "will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with you." Then, in thinking of the future, you can say, —

"There may be pain and grief and care;
But, O my Father! thou art there."

"Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

H. P. A.



For the Child at Home.

OUT IN THE STORM.

Dashes of rain 'gainst the window pane;
Sighing, wailing, and darkness without;
Flurries of sleet in the dismal street:
Oh, what a night to wander about!

See yon frail form alone in the storm! —
Poor little orphan, homeless and cold;
Father, mother, and darling brother,
Silently lie under earth's brown mould.

No voice to bless in her loneliness,
No roof to shelter her aching head;
A homeless child in the storm so wild:
Better to lie with the cherished dead.

A ruder blast, and the sleet falls fast;
Louder and higher the tempest raves:
Children at rest in the dear home nest
Slumber, nor dream of life's troubled waves.

Poor little Kate by the rich man's gate
Patiently crouched in her helpless woe:
"God will relieve; he will not deceive,
I know; for dear mother told me so."

Blest be thy trust! Truly God is just;
He will not forsake thee, little Kate:
E'en now kind friends he lovingly sends;
No longer shalt thou in sorrow wait.

In from the storm they bear the chilled form:
"Sweet child, she shall fill our lost one's place."
Ah, happy Kate! through the rich man's gate
She passed to a tender, fond embrace.

Sheltered from harm by a mighty arm,
The golden gate may she enter in!
Life's storms o'erpast, may she find at last
The rest which the pure in heart shall win!

Dewdrop.

For the Child at Home.

"I'LL KEEP MY EYES SHUT."

Little Henry has been quite sick. When he was slowly recovering, and just able to be up and about the room, he was left alone a short time; when his

sister came in, eating a piece of cake. Henry's mother had told him he must eat nothing but what she gave him, and that it would not be safe for him to have what the other children did till he was stronger.

His appetite was coming back; the cake looked inviting; he wanted very much to take a bite of it; and his kind sister would gladly have given it to him. What did he do?

"Jennie," said he, "you must run right out of the room away from me with that cake; and I'll keep my eyes shut while you go, so that I sha'n't want it."

Wasn't that a good way for a little boy of seven years to get out of temptation? I think so. And when I heard of it, I thought that there are a great many times when children, and grown people too, if they would remember little Henry's way, would escape from sin and trouble.

"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in Thy way," was the Psalmist's prayer; and it is a good one for each of us.

Victor.

For the Child at Home.

THE HIDDEN SIN.

BY UNA LOOKE.

When my Aunt Fidelia was a little girl, she used to go and play with her friend Olive, who had a great many treasures arranged in the garret; such as broken pieces of crockery, very beautiful in color and variety; shreds and scraps of bright-colored chintz and silk; dolls made of cobs covered with coarse cloth, and having tow sewed on their heads for hair. The little girls were just as happy as you are with your mahogany baby-house and tiny china tea-sets, your wax dolls with their elegant dresses, and your curious paper ladies and children. Happiness does not depend on what we have around us, but on our dispositions and the temper of our minds, as you will learn some day.

Fidelia was not quite happy, and the reason was this. She coveted two charming scraps of chintz (as they used to call calico in those days) which were among Olive's possessions. They tempted her as the Babylonish garment did Achan thousands of years before.

"How I wish I had those pieces!" she said to herself. "Olive has so many more, what difference would it make with her if I had these? She would not miss them, and I want them so! I would be perfectly happy to have these pieces. But, if I asked Olive, she would begin to think they were quite valuable, while now she hardly notices them."

While she thought thus, Olive proposed suddenly to go down stairs, and bring up some nut-cakes and cheese. "I sha'n't be gone but a minute," she said.

But that minute was long enough to make little Fidelia a thief. She did not pause to think of any thing except how nice an opportunity it was to take the bits of chintz. So she hid them in her bosom with great satisfaction, and Olive on her return did not miss them. But, after a little, Fidelia began to feel uneasy. The pieces did not seem half so beautiful or desirable as they had done just before. But she carried them home with her, and now her troubles began. She did not dare decorate her dolls with them, lest there should be inquiry made about them.

There seemed to be no place in the house secret enough for them. If she carried them in her bosom, they were too near her conscience. Of what use were they to her? None. She wished so much they were back again in Olive's garret! but she did not dare to carry them back. It was a pity she had not read in the Bible, just then, this verse: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." I think, little reader, you had better commit these words to memory.

Fidelia, growing desperate, ran out to the pig-pen, and, drawing forth the handsome scraps, threw them in. But the swine paid no attention to them. There they lay in plain view. So she was obliged to clamber over and recover them. Then she went out to the orchard, south of the house, and buried them under an apple-tree. But the burden remained on her mind.

After she became a woman, and hoped all her sins were forgiven through Christ, she still remembered this sin of her childhood, and was sorry for it. She passed away from earth some years ago, an old, gray-haired woman; and, on one of the last summers of her life, she told me this little story.

It is always so with all sin, great and little. It looks pleasant to us before it is committed, but afterwards it is a stinging serpent.



For the Child at Home.

HATTIE.

She is one of my little nieces, about four years old; and she says so many pretty things, that I think perhaps you would like to hear about her. She's just like a little dumpling, so plump and white; and her brown eyes seem dancing with fun. She is a kind and gentle little girl; and whenever mother says, "Hattie, run and bring me this or that," she does not stop to finish what she is doing, or linger until her mother is obliged to speak again, but trots off as fast as her little legs will carry her, so happy is she to obey her dear, kind mother.

One very cold day in winter, I took her to walk. Poor little thing! she was almost frozen, and complained of her fingers and feet aching. Presently we met another little girl, with no shoes on, and only a ragged shawl to protect her from the biting frost and wind. She asked for a few cents; but, as I had no change in my purse, I could give her nothing. Hattie's brown eyes filled with tears as she looked first at the child, then at me, and then down at her own warm dress and comfortable cloak; but I said, "Come, dear; don't stand in the cold. Perhaps we may meet the little girl again when we are out, and then we will give her something."

I turned away, and walked on for a few rods; then turned back again to take my darling's hand. There sat the little creature upon the cold sidewalk, with one shoe off, and the other untied. "Hattie, come," said I. "What are you doing?"

"Oh, auntie," returned she, "dis poor little dirl so cold! I dot plenty more soos."

Dear little children, would that we were all as wholly generous as my Hattie! She was almost crying with the pain in her own feet before we met the poor little child, but forgot her trouble when she saw the outcast and miserable, and gladly took off her shoes to give to one who was suffering more than herself.

I do not say that I want you to be generous in just this way, by taking off your clothing to give to beggars in the streets. Little Hattie did as her baby judgment dictated, and the act showed a kind and gentle heart; and I want you to be like her in your tenderness and pity for the poor and sorrowing.

F. B. S.

For the Child at Home.
WHAT THE ANGEL BROUGHT.

I do not believe you could guess if you should try. It is something so very precious, of more value than all the gems and gold that are in the world; because this thing that the angel brought me will never perish, though the world itself shall be destroyed, and all the works that are therein.

Are you getting impatient to know?

It is the dearest, tiniest little creature you ever saw; unless perhaps there is a little baby in your own house just as sweet and cunning, which you call "brother" or "sister."

Such wee bits of hands, that make giants of mine in comparison! and such a dot of a body to hold an immortal soul!

It lies helplessly upon my lap, and looks up at me with its earnest eyes, as if it were wondering what strange being hung over it. And as for me, I am in still greater amazement as I look down upon the marvelous gift that God has sent to the household. I can not fathom the mystery of that little spirit that is to stay for a while here upon the earth, and by and by go hence to dwell with God for ever and ever, *if it will*. And I can not think it would choose the other alternative, to be with Satan. One thing I know, and it is a happy thought: Satan can not touch the little babies; he was never a little infant himself. Jesus is always with them. He was born a little baby, of a human mother; and he is especially near the innocent ones who have just entered this mortal life.

I must ask him to keep beside the precious little daughter that he has sent us, so long as she shall live here below; and to make her his own dear child, even from the beginning; so that, when he shall send his angel again to take back the gift that he has only lent us for a season, he may find it unsullied by contact with an evil and ungodly world.

For the Child at Home.

LILLY'S WISH.

"Oh, mamma, I wish heaven was so near that a beautiful angel could come flying in at this window!" and Lilly's eyes looked wondrously bright as she put into words the thought that had been exercising her little brain while she sat so quietly by her mother that June morning. A charming morning it was. The mingled perfume of flowers came floating in at the open window on every breeze, while, without, a landscape of beauty was spread all around as far as the eye could reach; and yet Lilly's thoughts were turned from all this to the far more beautiful heaven, and the bright inhabitants of that better land. Why such ideas should enter her mind I can not tell; and she could not, I am sure, for she was a little bit of a girl, not four years old: but I think it more than probable that there was a good angel even then in the room putting these sweet thoughts into her mind, though she could not see him. The Bible gives us reason to believe that angels do minister to Christ's followers here on earth; and certainly we may suppose that the dear little ones share largely in their kind and loving services. Not long before this, Lily had been very sick, and her friends all thought she was going to leave them to join the glorious company of children "around the throne of God in heaven;" and many beautiful words she spoke during that terrible illness, that I love to remember, though I am not her mamma, and was then a great many miles away from her.

Some think if children talk much about heaven, especially when they are sick, that it is a kind of warning that they are soon to die. But I do not

think so. I love to know that little children's thoughts often turn toward that world where the dear Saviour has gone to make ready a far more lovely home for them than any earthly one can possibly be made. I love to think that He who when on earth took just such little ones in his arms and blessed them still remembers and loves them; and if they often think of him, and of all he has done for them, it makes me hope they will try to be like him; and if he has work for them to do on earth, he will not call them away until it is finished.

How beautiful was that inquiry a little boy made of his dear minister when he was sick, and seemed about to die!—"Is God acquainted with Willie?"

I heard the good minister himself relate it in a children's meeting; and I wish I could tell all about it as beautifully as he did, and how he told him that God was "acquainted" with him, knew his name, and where he lived, and how sick he was, and that he need not be afraid to go to him; that he would take care of him, and give him a home in heaven, where he would be safe and well and happy for ever. And so I will tell all my little readers, if they love Jesus, and are gentle and obedient, God, their best friend, will surround them ever with his gracious care. It may be that he will do this by sending bright angels to minister to them; and, when he is ready for them, he will take them to himself in heaven.

L.



For the Child at Home.

FUN THAT'S WORTH HAVING.

"Come, Tim, come out and go with me. There's fun for us. I'm going to get Maurice, and we three can do it."

"What's up so early? What are you going to do with that shovel?"

"Oh! you come on, and bring your shovel too. It was a big storm last night. The snow is piled up. You'll see the fun directly."

Tim good-naturedly joined Willie; and soon the company was made up to three by the addition of Maurice, who was always ready to go into any arrangement with a playmate who had provided many a good time for him.

"Now, what is it, Willie?" asked Maurice.

"Well, you see the Widow Marvin's cottage down in the lane was half buried by the snow last night. Poor old soul! Since Dick was killed in the war, I've thought a good deal about her. She's got no son now, you know, boys, to love her; and I thought you'd all like to go down with me, and shovel her out, as they say,—give her some paths; for she can't get out of doors at all as it is now."

"Good!" cried Tim. "That's fun worth having. Come on, all hands!"

They were soon in the lane in front of the cottage and at it. The widow heard the sound of merry

voices, and, coming to the window, looked out over the huge snow-bank that almost shut off her view of the lane, and caught sight of the bright faces of her kind young helpers, who nodded toward her, as if to say, "Never fear, good woman; warm hearts and willing hands are at work for you;" which she answered with a grateful smile. It was not long before they had cut a nice path through the deep bank quite to her door, and then from that out to the wood-shed. She came to the door as they finished the work. "Come in, boys, and let me thank you for your kindness to a poor old woman."

"Here we are," laughed Willie, as the boys stepped inside the door a moment, each with a hearty "Good morning!" "And now we'll be off again; for its most school-time."

"My dear boys," the widow said, "I thank you for the work you have so kindly done. It may seem a little thing to you that you have left your play to come and care for me, to do what poor Dick would have done if he had been here; but it is of such little things that the blessed Lord will say at last, 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.' May your young hearts be filled with the love of Him who remembers those that for his sake remember his poor!"

"Good-by, Mrs. Marvin; we've enjoyed it first rate, haven't we, boys?" and with a shout the boys were off.

"I'm glad you thought of that job Willie," said Maurice.

"And I too," said Tim. "It's a kind of fun that makes me feel like—well, like doing just so again."

The war which is ended has made widows and childless ones in almost every village. Boys, is there no such "fun" as this which you can have, causing the heart of the widow and the childless "to sing for joy"? Will you not try to find something like it to do this winter, and do it for the sake of Him, "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor"?

Uncle Paul.

For the Child at Home.

GIFTS.

BY FRANCIS LEE.

Emily had been reading about a lady who sang so sweetly to a homesick soldier who had lost an arm, that he almost forgot his pain and his loneliness; and, pounding on the floor with his one hand, he said, "I can't cheer, but I must pound." Then she remembered a story she once heard of another lady who won over a godless old man and woman, first to church, and then to Christ, by the beautiful hymns she sung in their hearing.

"Now," thought Emily, "if I could only sing and do something pleasant like that, how I would delight in making such charming music, that people should forget all their cares and troubles when they heard me, and only think of sunshine and flowers and heaven and such beautiful things! It is a great trial. I have not the gift; and I do wonder why I couldn't have been created with as fine a voice as Ethel Barnard's. She doesn't appreciate or do half the good with it I would."

Emily sat at the dinner-table while she thought over these discontented thoughts; and she was not so busy with her thinking but that she noticed how good the soup was, and how refreshing her saucer of currants, the first of the season, tasted.

But in the midst there came a wailing cry from the bedroom, faint and broken at first, but growing gradually louder and more imperative.

Her mother looked at Emily: she did not start, but only ate the faster, till she was obliged to speak.

